A

Seasonable Discourse:

Shewing how that the

OATHS

OF

Allegiance & Supremacy,

(As Our Laws Interpret them)

Contain Nothing which any Good Christian Ought to Boggle at.

By *W. B.*

Bonæ res neminem Scandalizant, nisi malam mentem: agnoscant malum suum qui de tali bono Scandalizantur. Tertul. de Virg. Vel. c. 3.

Good things Scandalize none that are Good: Let them then that are Scandalized at Good, acknowledge the Ill Disposition of their own Souls.

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The Oath of *Supremacy.*

I A. B. *Do utterly teſtifie and declare in my Conſcience, That the KINGS MAJESTY is the only Supreme Governour of this Realm, and of all other his Highneſs Dominions and Countries, as well in all Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical things or Cauſes, as Temporal: And that no Forreign Prince, Perſon, Prelate, State or Potentate hath or ought to have any Juriſdiction, Power, Superiority, Pre-eminence, or Authority Eccleſiaſtical or Spiritual within this Realm: And therefore I do utterly renounce and forſake all Forreign Juriſdictions, Powers, Superiorities, and Authorities: And do Promiſe, that from henceforth I ſhall bear faith and true Allegiance to the Kings Highneſs, his Heirs and Lawful Succeſſors, and to my Power ſhall Aſſiſt and Defend all Juriſdictions, Priviledges, Pre-eminencies and Authorities granted or belonging to the Kings Highneſs, his Heirs and Succeſſors, or united and annexed to the Imperial Crown of this Realm: So help me God, and the Contents of this Book.*

The Oath of Allegiance.

I *A. B.* Do truely and ſincerely Acknowledge, Profeſs, Teſtify and declare in my Conſcience before God and the World, that our Soveraign Lord KING *Charles* is Lawful and Rightful KING of this Realm, and of all other his Majeſties Dominions and Countries; and that the *Pope*, neither of himſelf, nor by any Authority of the Church or See of *Rome*, or by any other means, with any other, hath any Power or Authority to Depoſe the KING, or to Diſpoſe any of his Majeſties Kingdoms or Dominions, or to Authorize any forreign Prince to Invade or Annoy him or his Countries, or to diſcharge any of his Subjects of their Allegiance and Obedience to his Majeſty; or to give Licenſe or Leave to any of them to bear Armes, to raiſe

Tumults, or to offer any Violence or Hurt to his Majeſties Royal Perſon, State or Government, or to any of his Majeſties Subjects, within his Majeſties Dominions. Alſo, I do Swear from my Heart, That notwithſtanding any Declaration or Sentence of Excommunication or Deprivation made or granted, or to be made or granted by the *Pope* or his Succeſſors, or by any Authority deſigned, or pretended to be deſigned from him or his See, againſt the ſaid King his Heirs or Succeſſors, or any Abſolution of the ſaid Subjects from their Obedience; I will bear Faith and True Allegiance to his Majeſty, his Heirs, Succeſſors, and him and them will defend to the uttermoſt of my Power againſt all Conſpiracies and Attempts whatſoever, which ſhall be made againſt him or their Perſons, their Crown or Dignity, by reaſon or colour of any ſuch Sentence or Declaration, or otherwiſe; and will do my beſt Endeavour to diſcloſe and make known unto his Majeſties Heirs and Succeſſors, all Treaſons and Traiterous Conſpiracies, which I ſhall know or hear of, to be againſt him or any of them. And I do further Swear, That I from my Heart, Abhor, Deteſt and Abjure as Impious and Heretical, this Damnable Doctrine and Poſition: That Princes which be Excommunicated or Deprived by the *Pope*, may be Depoſed or Murthered by their Subjects, or any other whatſoever. And I do believe, and in my Conſcience am reſolved that neither the *Pope* nor any Perſon whatſoever hath Power to Abſolve me of this Oath, or any part thereof, which I acknowledge by good and full Authority to be Lawfully Miniſtred unto me. And do renounce all Pardons and Diſpenſations to the Contrary. And all theſe things I do plainly and ſincerely acknowledge and ſwear according to theſe expreſs words by Me ſpoken, and according to the Plain and Common Senſe and Underſtanding of the ſame Words, without any Equivocation or Mental Evaſion, or ſecret Reſervation whatſoever. And I do make this Recognition and Acknowledgement heartily, willingly and truly, upon the true Faith of a Chriſtian. *So help me God.*

The Proviſo in the Statute of 5 *Eliz.* cap. 1.

PRovided alſo, That the Oath Expreſſed in the ſaid Act, made in the Firſt Year, ſhall be taken and Expounded in ſuch form as is ſet forth in an Admonition Annexed to the Queens Ma-

Majeſties Injunctions Publiſhed in the Firſt Year of her Majeſties Reign. That is to ſay, to Confeſs and Acknowledge in her Majeſty, her Heirs and Succeſſors, none other Authority than that was Challenged and lately uſed by the noble K. *Henry* 8. and K. *Edward* the *6th.* as in the ſaid Admonition more plainly appears.

The Admonition Annexed to the Queens Injunctions.

THe Queens Majeſty being informed, that in certain places of this Realm, ſundry of her Native Subjects being called to Eccleſiaſtical Miniſtry in the Church, be by ſiniſter perſwaſion, and perverſe Conſtruction, induced to find ſome ſcruple in the Form of an Oath, which by an Act of the laſt Parliament, is preſcribed to be required of diverſe perſons, for the Recognition of their Allegiance to her Majeſty, which certainly was neither ever meant, nor by any equity of words or good ſence, can be thereof gathered: VVould that all her loving Subjects ſhould underſtand, that nothing was, is, or ſhall be meant or intended by the ſame Oath, to have any other Duty, Allegiance or Bond required by the ſame Oath, than was acknowledg'd to be due to the moſt Noble Kings of Famous Memory, King *Henry* the eight, her Majeſties Father, or King *Edward* the ſixth her Majeſties Brother. And further, her Majeſty forbiddeth all manner her Subjects to give Ear or Credit to ſuch perverſe and malicious Perſons, which moſt ſiniſterly and maliciouſly, labour to notify to her loving Subjects how by the VVords of the ſaid Oath, it may be Collected the Kings or Queens of this Realm, Poſſeſſors of the Crown may challenge Authority and Power of Miniſtry of Divine Offices in the Church, wherein her ſaid Subjects be much abuſed by ſuch evil diſpoſed Perſons. For certainly her Majeſty neither doth, nor ever will Challenge any other Authority than that was Challenged and lately uſed by the ſaid Noble Kings of Famous Memory, King *Henry* the Eighth, and King *Edward* the Sixth. *WHICH IS AND WAS OF ANTIENT TIME DUE TO THE IMPERIAL CROWN OF THIS REALM.* That is under God to have the Soveraignty and Rule over all manner of Perſons born within theſe her Realms and Dominions and Countries, *SO AS* no other Forrein Power, ſhall, or ought

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to have any Superiority over them. And if any Perſon that hath conceived any other Senſe of the Form of the ſaid Oath, ſhall accept the ſame Oath with this Interpretation, ſenſe or meaning; her Majeſty is well pleaſed to accept every ſuch in that behalf as her good and Obedient Subjects, and ſhall acquit them of all manner of Penalties contained in the ſaid Act, againſt ſuch as ſhall Peremptorily or Obſtinately refuſe to take the ſame Oath.

The Legal Senſe of the Oath of *Supremacy*.

I A. B. *Do utterly Teſtify and Declare in my Conſcience, That the* KINGS MAJESTY *is the only Supream Governor of this Realm, and of all other his Highneſs Dominions and Countries, as well in all Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical things or Cauſes, that is, all Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical Things, or Cauſes, belonging to the contentious Court, relating to a Coactive Power of inflicting pecuniary Mulcts, impriſonment, &c. though to be Exerciſed by, or upon Spiritual Perſons, or others, for Spiritual ends; not in all Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical Things or Cauſes belonging to the Court of Conſcience, relating to a purely Spiritual Power of Binding and Loſing, or, Inflicting Spiritual cenſures of Excommunication, Suſpenſions, &c. As Temporal: And that no Forreign Prince, Perſon, Prelate, State, or Potentate, hath, or ought to have any Juriſdiction, Power, Superiority, Pre-eminence, or Authority Eccleſiaſtical, or Spiritual; That is, Coactive upon King or Subjects, by Depoſition, pecuniary Mulcts, Impriſonment, &c. Though to be Exerciſed for ſpiritual Ends, or by or upon ſpiritual Perſons, not no Juriſdiction, &c. Purely Spiritual, of deciding Controverſies of Faith, binding and loſing, &c. For, that would Exclude all Superiority, Patriarchal or of General, Or Patriarchal Councils, contrary to the profeſſion of the Church of* England: *Within this Realm. And therefore, I Do utterly Renounce and Forſake all Foreign Juriſdiction, Power, &c. Coactive, &c. as above. And Do Promiſe from henceforth I ſhall bear Faith and true Allegiance to the Kings Highneſs, &c. and to my Power ſhall Aſſiſt and Defend all Juriſdictions, Priviledges, &c. Coactive and belonging to the contentious Court, though to be Exerciſed for Spiritual Ends, and by or upon Spiritual Perſons, granted or belonging to the Kings Highneſs, &c.*

A Seaſonable Diſcourſe, &c.

IT is not fear of Perſecution that makes me ſet Pen to Paper, but a Chriſtian Compaſſion to Multitudes of well-meaning Souls, who expoſe themſelves to ſharp Sufferings in their Liberty and Eſtates without Cauſe. I well foreſee how ill what I intend to ſay will be taken by many, but I matter not the ſayings, or hard Cenſures of men, ſo long as my Conſcience Reprehends me not of doing any thing I deem Offenſive unto God. Theſe thoughts are not the Effects of the ſad diſturbances amongſt us, but I have above theſe two Years ſmother'd them in my Breaſt. And though many may be troubled at their firſt hearing, I doubt not but many more after a calm impartial Examen, will find no leſs ſatisfaction from them, than my ſelf. *Melius eſt*, ſaies the Great St. *Bernard*, *ut Scandalum oriatur quam ut verum non dicatur.* We muſt not forbear to ſpeak the Truth, becauſe we foreſee ſome Scandal or trouble in the minds of the Faithful may follow from it.

As to the taking of the two Oaths. In General; Let not him that Eats, deſpiſe him who Eats not; nor him that Eats not, Judge him that Eats. Let not him that takes the Oaths, deſpiſe him that takes them not; nor him that takes them not, Judge him who takes them. VVho art thou who Judgeſt anothers Servant, He ſtands or falls to his own Maſter. Thou O Man, who ever thou art, why doſt thou judg thy Brother? Or why doſt thou deſpiſe thy brother? For we ſhall all ſtand before the Tribunal of Chriſt, and every one for himſelf give an account of his doings to God. Let every one be fully ſatisfi'd in his own Mind, and do nothing either againſt Conſcience, or out of an Humorſom Stubborneſs, Paſſion, or Spirit of Contradiction. Let us no longer halt betwixt two: If God be God, let us Worſhip him; If *Baal*, let us Worſhip *Baal*. If Jeſus Chriſt has given Power to any Biſhop or Eccleſiaſtical Superior on Earth, to Depoſe Kings and Princes, or other coactive juriſdiction: In

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Gods Name, in the face of Heaven and *Earth*, before Angels and Men let us own it, and Couragiouſly expoſe our ſelves to ſuffer for it: We ſuffer for Chriſt, and hee'l Crown us for our Sufferings in the other VVorld. But if He have given no ſuch Power, & if neither he, nor his Apoſtles have taught the world any ſuch Doctrine; to Suffer for the freekiſh Phanſies of a few modern School-men, or the Ambition of a Politick Court, will give us but a piteous Title to the Crown of a Martyr. For my own part, I hope God will give me grace rather to die than forgo the leaſt Article of the truly Catholick Faith, or point of Chriſtian good manners; Yet I am reſolved, not to loſe a hair of my Head for the refuſal of the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy. I'le candidly propoſe my Reaſons, let my Catholick and Proteſtant Neighbors judge of me and them as beſt pleaſes them.

Our Bleſſed Saviour hath Manifeſtly Declared in the Holy Goſpel, that *His Kingdom is not of this World*; that is, that he neither came to be himſelf an abſolute temporal Prince, nor did he deſign to leave any Vicar after him with Temporal Dominion and Soverainty: Nor yet did he come to Eſtabliſh an Equivalent Vaſt Temporal Dominion, by giving his Chief Vicar St. *Peter* Abſolute Power, though not of Adminiſtring Dominion in his own Perſon, yet of Depoſing all Chriſtian Kings and Princes in caſe of Hereſy or Miſgovernment: As the Worthy Author of the Controverſial Letters has Learnedly Proved: To whom I refer thoſe who are afraid his Holineſs has indeed ſuch an indirect Power over all Chriſtian Kings and Princes Only take notice, how unworthy it had been of our Bleſſed Lord, his Candor and Simplicity, to tell *Pontius Pilate* expreſly and plainly, that *his Kingdom is not of this World*, and yet to give Private Commiſſion and Inſtructions to St. *Peter* and his Succeſſors in certain *Caſes* to Depoſe all *Chriſtian* Kings and Princes: which were cunningly and craftily to eſtabliſh under-hand a Temporal Dominion greater than that of *Cæſar* or *Alexander*. Reflect moreover; if our Lord Jeſus had indeed left a Depoſing Power to his Vicar, How comes it to paſs never any made uſe of it till *Gregory* the ſeventh in the eleventh Age, when notwithſtanding there wanted not occaſions to execute it upon Heretical Princes and Emperors. But the truth is, *Preces & Lachrymæ ſunt arma Eccleſiæ*, The Church of Chriſt has no other Guard againſt Tyranical

ranical Princes, whether Pagan or Heretical ſave only *Prayers* and *Tears*. Conſider moreover, the Depoſing Doctrine no ſooner appear'd in the VVorld but it found its Oppoſers, whereas had it been a Catholick Traditionary Doctrine, Taught from Father to Son all over the VVorld, from the Apoſtles, it would readily have been ſubmitted unto. This Point I confeſs ought here to be more fully Treated, as being the true cauſe of the difficulty, that is made by many to take the Oath either of Allegiance or Supremacy, whatſoever elſe may be pretended: yet, notwithſtanding, I ſhall wave it, becauſe the Ruder Roman Catholicks do generally without any ſcruple Renounce the Depoſing Power, and the Learneder may eaſily ſatisfie themſelves by what has been written by others. I know notwithſtanding the Commonalty have a great Horror of the Oath of Supremacy, but it is becauſe they underſtand not its Contents, but phanſy it contains a Renunciation of the Popes univerſal Paſtorſhip, and his purely ſpiritual Power of Excommunication, Binding and Loſing, &c. notwithſtanding all the Declarations of our Laws, Temporal Princes, and their Doctors, with their Knowledge and by their Appointment to the contrary. Beſides the unreaſonableneſs that any Prince ſhould require of his Subjects a ſolemn Renunciation of a Power, to the great diſturbance of publick Quiet and Amity, which he neither cares for, nor fears to have exerciſed upon him.

Conſider further, how unlikely it is our Lord Jeſus ſhould Eſtabliſh an Authority in the VVorld, without appointing Power to put it in Execution. He has indeed given Kings and Princes Authoritative Power to put Malefactors to Death, but he has together with it given a Coactive Power by force of Officers and Armys, to Execute their Authoritative Capital Sentences, and has oblig'd their Subjects to contribute their utmoſt Force to aſſiſt them: And indeed if he had not ſo Ordain'd, what a ridiculous *Pageant* would a King or other Civil Magiſtrate have been in the VVorld? a gawdy maukin with an Authoritative Power to condemn Malefactors to Die, without any Coactive force to Execute them in caſe they ſhould refuſe to lay their Necks upon the Block. Such a Scare-crow is an Eccleſiaſtical Prelate inveſted with a Depoſing Power over all Chriſtian Kings and Princes, but without any External Coactive Force to Execute his Depoſitions. Can it be imagin'd that a Prince ſuppo-

ſed to be an Heretick, that is one who Renounces all Church-Authority to follow ſome private Opinion of his own, would be ſuch a tame Creature, as quietly to Reſign up his temporal Dominion upon the pure Depoſitive Sentence of the chief Chriſtian Paſtor, without any External Force of Men and Arms? So that an indirect Temporal Power over all Chriſtian Kings and Princes to Depoſe them in caſe of Hereſy, unleſs you will make it a mere Mockery, Suppoſes a direct Temporal Soverainty to raiſe Armys, and levy Subſidies, either all over the Chriſtian VVorld, or at leaſt over ſuch a part of it, as may ſuffice to counterpoiſe the force of whatſoever Heretical Prince or Emperor, who ſhould refuſe to ſubmit to his Holineſs's Depoſing Sentence. Now, if to acckowledg ſuch a Power in the Pope, be not contrary to the expreſs VVord of God, I know not what is. And ſurely to be contrary to the expreſs VVord of God is properly enough Hereſiy. But then all who maintain the Depoſing Power are Hereticks. To ſay they are formal Hereticks is too ſevere, *Erare Poſſum hæreticus eſſe nolo.* An honeſt hearted Chriſtian may erre in a point of Faith, as the Glorious Martyr St. *Cyprian* is commonly ſuppoſed to have done: But he can not be an *Heretick*, becauſe that ſuppoſes an Obſtinacy againſt a ſufficient Propoſal of an Article of Faith, and that not only *in it ſelf*, but even *unto him*, which is Raſhneſs to ſuppoſe in every one who holds a material Hereſy through Power of Education, or for want of having well Examind the matter. But they who notwithſtanding all Reaſons propos'd, reſolve not to heed them, or yeild to them though never ſo plain, becauſe by blind Obedience to their Superior they are otherwiſe bound, are in danger to embrace a Principle, which (if that Superior be not infallible) hazards to deſtroy both their ſpeculative and practical Chriſtianity, both Faith and good Manners; and to preſer the Policy of their particular Body before the Common good of Religion or Salvation of their own Souls. Let them thus Charitably forewarnd, look to the dangerous Conſequences enſuing upon it.

But ſome perhaps will ſay; It ſeems to have a ſpecial ſcandal now to Abjure the depoſing Power, when our Neighbors as well Proteſtants as Catholicks will be apt to ſuſpect we Abjure it not out of judgment, but out of fear of ſuffering for it. He that conſiders the Winds, ſhall never Sow. And he that will forbear

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to do his Duty, and to profeſs the Truth for fear of ſuſpicious and Malevolent Surmiſes, ſhall never diſcharge a good Conſcience: Though indeed if we weigh our Circumſtances aright; we ſeem now to have a particular Obligation to Renounce all appearance of King-Depoſing or King Killing Doctrine, when we are ſo univerſally ſo horridly Charged with them. That as to Men: And then as to Almighty God, when he ſeems to Scourge us for theſe very Doctrines, if we would have Him hold his hand in puniſhing of us, no ſuch means as to confeſs our Fault and the Fault of our Foreſathers and amend. Had we but univerſally taken even the very Oath of Allegiance, ſuch Horrible Accuſations as have of late been caſt upon us would not have ſtuck. Every Sin breedes its own puniſhment out of it ſelf, and King-Depoſing Doctrin held by ſome Regulars of our Communion, does Connaturally make our Superiors jealous of our Allegiance: becauſe (afraid that theſe perſons would Perſecute us for it at *Rome*) we have only by private Writings and and Decrees, and not by publickly diſowning and Oppoſing ſuch ill Principles, cleer'd our ſelves fully of ſuch ſuſpicions. And our Anceſtors burning misbelievers in Queen *Maries* Days for Hereſies which had no Connection at all with Diſloyalty, juſtly brings upon us Sufferings purely for our Conſciences. Whereas had all Catholicks conſtantly proteſted with the Great St. *Martin*, againſt Fire and Sword purely for Hereſy, they might have expected a peaceable living under otherwiſe believing Magiſtrates, provided they had given Security of their Loyalty. And indeed what does it hinder any Man from being a good Subject, his believing or not believing Tranſubſtantiation, Purgatory, or Prayer to Saints? But to believe that its Lawful for Subjects to take up Arms againſt their Prince, or that the *Pope* has Power to Depoſe their Prince, and Abſolve Subjects from their Allegiance; Theſe are Errors which the Civil Magiſtrate has reaſon to take notice of, and puniſh the maintainers of them as fomenters of Rebellion and Sedition. And this ſeems to have been the Spirit of Chriſt and his Church from the beginning; though it cannot be denied, but whoſoever were in Power, whether Orthodox or Misbelieving, they have been very ſevere to all Diſſenters. Yet I ſay this perſecuting Spirit purely for Conſcience ſeems not to have been the Spirit of our bleſſed Lord, He expreſly diſclaiming it; and telling

ling his Diſciples they knew not what Spirit they were of, when they would have had him conſume with Fire from Heaven, the unbelieving *Samaritans*: Nor does it ſeem to have been the Spirit of the Church, ſhe ſtill refuſing to have her hand in the blood of the moſt Obſtinate Hereticks, and for this Cauſe after ſhe had Excommunicated them, delivering them up to the Civil Magiſtrates, not to the end that they ſhould without any further Examen, take away their Lives for their Hereſy; For, that had been but a Juggle, but to the end they ſhould Examine whether the Hereſy they ſtood Convicted of, had any Repugnancy to the Civil Peace or no, and then accordingly puniſh or acquit them. It is very remarkable to this purpoſe, what is recounted by *Sulpitius* in the ſtory of St. *Martin*. Where we read how that Great ſervant of Almighty God refuſed to Communicate with *Ithacius*, and a whole Council of Catholick Biſhops, becauſe they urged the Emperor *Maximus* to Perſecute with Fire and Sword the *Priſcillian* Hereticks in *Spain*, judging ſuch Violences contrary to the meek Spirit of Chriſt and His Holy Goſpel. Although when by no other means he could perſwade the Emperor to deſiſt from his bloody deſign againſt thoſe Deluded Hereticks, he Communicated for once with the Sanguinary perſecuting Biſhops, not in their perſecution but in the Ordination of a Catholick Biſhop. And yet even this ſo wounded his tender Conſcience, that he inſtantly Retracted what he had done, and was ſo ſadly Dejected for it, that he needed the Conſolation of an Angel, who as *Sulpitius* recounts, appeared unto him, and told him he could not otherwiſe eſcape, and bad him Reſume his former Conſtancy; and accordingly the Sixteen Years he lived afterwards, he refuſed to Communicate with thoſe perſecutors: and obſerved that the power of caſting out Devils which our Lord Miraculouſly gave him, was nothing ſo efficacious as before his Communion with thoſe perſecuting Prelats for an Heretical Conſcience, and that but once, and that too forced out of charity to the Heretical *Priſciaianiſts*, who otherwiſe muſt have loſt their Lives by Fire and Sword. If this bleſſed Saint, was ſo Zealous againſt ſanguinary perſecution of the Inferior commonalty in caſe of Hereſy, as to refuſe Communion with the Catholick Abettors of ſuch External Violence, how far would he have been think you from Depoſing and Murthering Soveraign Kings and Princes, though not only ſuppoſedly but

even

even never so truly tainted with Damnable Error and Hereſy? That great Saint thought thoſe Biſhops unworthy of any Chriſtian communion, who by the Emperors Sword would dare to take away the Lives of the Heretical Multitude, but how much rather would he have refuſed Communion to thoſe who with a ſword of their own by a pretended Delegation from *St. Peter* would preſume to cut off not the Ears but Heads of Heretical Soveraign Monarches? Firſt let all Diſſenters from the Religion Eſtabliſhed by Law, heartily Renounce all Doctrines inconſiſtent with the preſent and future civil Peace, that is the Doctrine of Depoſing Princes, or taking up Arms againſt them, and the Doctrine of ſanguinary Perſecution for ſuppoſed or real Errors when they have no Repugnancy to the Temporal quiet, and then complain they ſuffer not not for Treaſon but purely for Conſcience. Princes are not ſecure of their Subjects Allegiance who hold the Depoſing or Rebelling Doctrine; nor are the commonalty ſecure of their Lives againſt their fellow Neighbours, who hold ſanguinary perſecution for an erroneous Conſcience lawful and laudable, any longer than they are the leſſer number, and conſequently upon a Civil account by way of ſelf defence they juſtly provide againſt their increaſe. But this by the way.

To the point in hand. I conceive the end of an Oath is, to ſecure the perſon who propoſes it, that the taker of it is ſerious, and reſolved in what he aſſerts or promiſes in the ſenſe of the Propoſer. Hence if it were Lawful to Swear in a ſenſe different from the intention of the propoſer, an Oath would be to no purpoſe. If then I be aſſured that what the propoſer of an Oath requires of me, either by way of Aſſeveration or promiſe, is nothing but what is true and good; I ſee not why I ſhould ſcruple ſuch an Oath, provided the Words of the Oath be but tolerably capable of that ſenſe, which the propoſer requires me to ſwear in. Now as to the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, it ſeemes manifeſt, that the preſent propoſers require nothing of me but what is Chriſtianly and good. To wit, from my Heart ſo aſſert, that his Majeſty is my Supream Lord and Soveraign, and that the *Pope* has no Depoſing Power, nor any power in *England* repugnant to his Majeſties Supream Soveraignty over all his Subjects, as well Eccleſiaſtical as Civil. And as to the poſitive part, there is no

difficulty, to wit, to acknowledge his Majeſty to have the Supreme Authority over all his Subjects, as well Eccleſiaſtical as Civil: but the pretended difficulty in the Oath of Supremacy is in the Negative part of it, whereby we acknowledge no other Prince or Prelate has any Superiority in *England*, which ſeems to exclude the *Popes* purely Spiritual power in the Court of Conſcience, to give Orders, *&c.* Which none can deny to him who acknowledges him to be a Biſhop, and Conſequently a Lawful Succeſſor to either *Peter* or *Paul* or any of the Apoſtles; to whom (and in them to every of their Succeſſors) it was ſaid, *Sicut miſit me Pater ita ego mitto vos*, &c.

But that the intent of the Oath was not to exclude this ſtrict Spiritual Power, is proved firſt. Becauſe it cannot be ſuppoſed that a Prince, in an Oath, whereby he profeſſes to deſign to ſecure his Subjects Allegiance to him, would exclude a Superiority over his Subjects, which ſtood very well with their Acknowledgment of his Soveraign Authority; but if he did in any Oath, by any Clauſe in it, exclude any other Prince or Prelates Superiority over his Subjects, he ought in reaſon to be underſtood to exclude ſuch a Superiority as was inconſiſtent and repugnant to his own Superiority, not ſuch a Superiority as ſtood well with it, and did not in the leaſt infringe or diminiſh it. For Example, I Hire a Servant, and lay an Obligation upon him, That he ſhall be at my Command, and no body elſe ſhall have any power to Command him. As indeed every Servant is ſo under his Maſters command. Now, no man can reaſonably imagine, that I intend by ſuch an Obligation, to Tie him from following and obeying the Commands of his Spiritual Director for his Souls health: For example; To make Reſtitution in caſe of Theft, to Faſt and Pray to appeaſe Gods Anger for his Sins, or any thing elſe which has nothing to do with his Maſters civil commands in the ſervice for which he was Hired. In like manner, I am to Acknowledge my Temporal Prince, ſo far my abſolute Superiour, whether I be a Clergy-man or a Layman, ſo as the *Pope* or other *Prelate* has no ſuperiority over me, repugnant or inconſiſtent with my *Princes* abſolute *Soveraignty* over me; not no power to admit me to the Sacraments being Worthy, or to Excommunicate me being Obſtinate; which ſtand very well with my abſolute *Obedience* to all my *Princes* civil commands.

Secondly, Becauſe the Oath of *Supremacy*, according to its legal

gal interpretation by Q. *Elizabeths* Injunctions, if interpreted to signifie an *Abjuration* of the *Popes* purely ſpiritual power of giving *Orders*, *Binding* and *Loſing*, &c. is abſolute Non ſenſe; wherefore, to *Swear* to it in that interpretation, can not be ſuppoſed to be required of me. For the Oath runs thus: *You ſhall Acknowledge his Majeſty to be Supreme Governour over all Perſons, as well Eccleſiaſtical as Civil, ſo as no other Prince or Prelate ſhall have any Superiority over you.* That is, if you will make it ſenſe, *No Superiority repugnant to the Kings Soveraignty over you.* But if you will make it Non-ſenſe, *No Superiority conſiſtent with his Majeſties Soveraignty.* To aſſert an Abſolute Soveraignty, and to exclude by a *SO AS*, a Superiority which has nothing at all to do with it, is againſt common ſenſe. For example, ſhould I ſay to my Servant; *I am your Superiour, to Command you what I pleaſe, ſo as no body who is dead a hundred Years ago, has power to command you any thing*; This were abſolute Non ſenſe: But to ſay, *I am your Superiour, ſo as no body now alive, has power to command you any thing*; This is good ſenſe: And therefore, when I ſpeak indefinitly, I am to be ſuppoſ'd to ſpeak in this latter Interpretation, and not in the former. And 'tis the ſame Nonſenſe to ſay to your ſervant, *I am your Superiour, ſo as no body in another Order ſhall command you any thing conſiſtent with my Commands.* But then when my Superiour, in whoſe favour I take the Oath, profeſſes to require no more of me; and this Interpretation is approved by Act of Parliament, How can I with reaſon Boggle at the Oath in that allowed ſenſe? Now its clear, out of the Injunctions of Q. *Elizabeth*, that ſhe required no more.

Note, That there is a double Spiritual Power in the *Pope*, and other *Eccleſiaſtical Prelates:* One purely Spiritual, and exerciſed in the *Court of Conſcience:* ſuch is the power to *Bind* and *Loſe*, to inflict *Church Cenſures*, purely ſuch, &c. The other is, a coactive Spiritual Power, or Juriſdiction; that is, a coactive power to force by *Exterior Mulcts*, pecuniary or impriſonment as to Subjects, depoſing as to Princes, in caſe the Commonalty or Princes refuſe to take notice of *purely Spiritual Cenſures:* Now this is the *Power* that I am required to *Renounce* by the Oath of *Supremacy*, That the *Pope* has no ſuch coactive Spiritual power over King or Subject in *England*; but if he or any other Biſhop exerciſe any ſuch Power, they muſt do it not by any Authoritative

tative Power given them ſo to do by Chriſt, but given them by the King, and dependantly on him. Such a ſpiritual coactive power is exerciſed by Biſhops in their Spiritual Contentious Courts, which power they pretend not to have from Chriſt, but from the Secular Magiſtrate. Nor had the Church of Chriſt any ſuch Temporal Power before She had Chriſtian Temporal Princes, who gave it Her; and if they will take it away, whether juſtly or unjuſtly that concerns not us. She has ſuch power no longer. A Biſhop, by authority from Chriſt, may Excommunicate, and deny the Communion to an Obſtinate Offender; but in caſe the Offender ſlight his Excommunication, and refuſe to amend, he can neither depoſe him if he be a King, nor lay any Temporal Mulct upon him, if he be an ordinary perſon. Indeed, if Kings and Princes give either the *Pope*, or other *Biſhops*, power to inflict pecuniary mulcts or impriſonment upon refractory contemners of their *Eccleſiaſtical Cenſures*; then the *Pope* will have ſuch a power, and other inferior *Biſhops* too, but neither as from Chriſt, but as from the Fountain of all Coactive Juriſdiction, Temporal and Spiritual, the Secular Magiſtrate.

Conſider, what Cares a Temporal Prince for the Excommunication of a Prelate a *Thouſand* Miles off, provided he could be ſecure, Excommunicated or not Excommunicated, of his Crown and his Subjects Allegiance? Whatſoever *Henry* the *Eighth* might fear, now in an Age, when *Roman-Catholicks* generally would Pay his Majeſty the ſame Allegiance, though Excommunicated by the *Pope*, how can it Reaſonably be Imagin'd, that he ſhould require of his Subjects a Renunciation of the *Popes* properly and purely Spriritual Power of Excommunication, giving Orders, *&c.* and not rather a Renunciation of his Improperly and Coactive Spiritual Power of Depoſition, *&c.* when not only by Word of Mouth, but by the Pens of the Learndſt of his Clergy, he profeſſes to require mo more. When beſides, we ſee dayly an actual Exerciſe of the *Popes* Spiritual Power amongſt us of giving Orders and Adminiſtration of all the Sacraments acknowledged to be *Valid*. If the *Pope* have in the acknowledgement of *Proteſtants* no Spiritual Power in *England* to give Orders, *&c.* Why are not *Roman-Catholick* Prieſts, when they joyn themſelves to the Church of *England*, as well Re-ordained as *Geneva* Miniſters?

Again King *James* Profeſſes Expreſly in his Premonitions to Chriſtian

Christian Princes, that when the House of Commons would have had him put into the Oath of Allegiance that the *Pope* had no Power to Excommunicate him, he not only refused to do so, but for this very Reason, because he would not intrap the Consciences of his *Catholick* Subjects. Now what a dissimulation would this have been (and which in Christian Charity we ought not to surmrize of our Sovereign Liege) if he had at the same time continued another Oath in full force which did actually entrap their Consciences, as indeed he did in case the Oath of Supremacy require an Abrenuntiation of the *Popes* purely Spiritual power, and not only of his Coactive Spiritual power repugnant to his civil Supream Authority?

Reflect also, King *James* was not against the *Popes* being *Patriark* of the *West*, or (which is the same thing) not against a Patriarchal power purely Spiritual in him, and Consequently cannot reasonably be supposed to require others to Abjure what he would be for himself. And one who would be for the *Popes* being *Patriark* of the *West*, could be no more against all Spiritual power of the *Pope* in *England*, than he who acknowledges him Supreme Pastor both of the *Eastern* and *Western* Church.

It's worth our observing, that the great Sticklers against the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy hugg the Deposing Power in their Hearts, and therefore no wonder they are unwilling to abjure it with their Mouths, and endeavour what they can to make others quarrel with them upon other Accounts: with the Oath of Allegiance, because as they will have it, it sayes, it's Heretical to hold the Deposing Power: and with the Oath of Supremacy, because they will needs have it to include a Renunciation of all Spiritual Papal Power, as well Internal in the Court of Conscience, as Coctaive and in the Contentious Court: because they know in this sense, not only themselves, but also Abjurers of the *Popes* Deposing Power as Heretical and Anti-Christian will not take it. But I see no reason why more Loyally Principled *Roman-Catholicks* should permit themselves to be Imposed upon any longer by such New Masters of New Doctrines. For the plain truth too manifestly seems to be, that the wording of the Oaths is pretended, but the true cause of their refusal of them is the true Christian sense of them: that is, that his Holiness has no Coactive Spiritual jurisdiction in *England*. One who in his Heart believes this, has no reason to Boggle at either of the Oaths.

Take notice alſo, Proteſtant Doctors with the connivance and allowance of our Kings and *Princes* have made an interpetation of the Oath of Supremacy, which no Roman-Catholick in *France*, *Germany*, or *Venice*, but would ſubſcribe and ſwear unto. Nor would he be permitted to live in *France*, who ſhould profeſs to hold ſuch a temporal power in the *Pope* independant of the King as we are required to abjure. Dr. *Bilſon* in Queen *Elizabeths* Daies, Dr. *Carlton* in King *James's* ; and Dr. *Bramhall* in our preſent Soveraigns and his *Royal* Fathers; as ſhall be cited below. Now what more ordinary than to interpret his Holineſs's Bulls in the Senſe which Canoniſts and other Doctors with his knowledge and connivance put upon them. Only the words of the two Oaths of Allegiance & Supremacy muſt be kept upon the rack, contrary to all Oral Proteſtations and Parliamentary Declarations of our *Princes*, and Licenſed explications of their Learneſt Doctors, whileſt the bottom of all is that really and indeed, for other reaſons we have no mind to take them, but are aſham'd to ſay plainly and candidly upon what account. And 'tis ſtrange what Interpretations we can put upon the Commands and Laws of our Superiors according as they like or diſlike us. If his Holineſs prohibit a book we have a mind ſhould be prohibited, what diligence is there not uſed to preſs upon the Vulgar its prohibition ? but if he prohibit a book we value and eſteem; the prohibition was procured out of a pique, and the book is not prohibited abſolutely, but only that Edition printed at *Milain*: if there be but a comma difference betwixt that and the *Paris* Edition, ther's no Obligation to take notice of the command of the Apoſtolical See. If we can thus trifle with his Holineſs's Commands, when they like not our humors, what wonder if we aukwarldy Interpret the Laws of our Civil Superiors, when we like not to obey them? *At* leaſt, let us give our Kings and *Princes* ſuch a regard as we expect from our own menial Servants, and be ſatisfied, as to the meaning of their dubious Commands, when they tell us over and over they mean nothing but what we acknowledge to be juſt and reaſonable, and not ſtand at bay with them, and threap them into a meaning which themſelves acknowledg to be unjuſt and unreaſonable.

Conſider moreover, it is our Superior, Gods Vicegerent, our Liege, our Father, our Lord we Diſpute withal; and conſequently

ſequently we ought as good Chriſtians of our own accords, to put the moſt favorable interpretation the words will bear, upon his commands; and if his commands be capable of a good ſenſe and a bad, we ought to ſuppoſe he means them in the good ſenſe: Eſpecially when he tells us he means them in the good ſenſe, and moſt of all when it is to his purpoſe to require our Obedience in the good ſenſe, and wholly inſignificant to require them in the bad ſenſe, which is manifeſtly our Caſe. For, that *I* renounce the Depoſing *Power*, it concerns my Prince; becauſe otherwiſe, he can have no ſecurity of his Crown, Life, or my Loyalty any longer than the Pope pleaſes; but as to my renouncing or owning the Popes purely ſpiritual power of binding or loſing ſins, giving Orders, *&c.* it neither ſecures nor endangers his Regal *Authority* in the leaſt. If it be praiſe-worthy blindly to obey our Regular Superiors even when they Command us things ſeemingly ridiculous; to ſet for example, the tops of Trees downwards, and the roots in the *Aire*, ſure it can not be much amiſs a litle to ſubmit our Judgments, or, rather our phanſys to the equitable commands of our Temporal Soveraigns, Leſt we otherwiſe hear and deſervedly *Qui abundat in ſuperfluis deficit in neceſſariis:* We abound in Obediences to no purpoſe, whilſt we are deficient in ſuch as are abſolutely neceſſary. We tythe *Mint* and *Annice*, and neglect the weightier matters of the Law.

Reflect alſo, that we being of a different Religion from our Civil Superiors, are apt to make the worſt Interpretation of their words and actions. And when they deſign only to ſecure our Civil Allegiance, which ſome mens principles amongſt us give them but too juſt cauſe to ſuſpect, we are inſtantly jealous they ſecretly go about to make us renounce the undoubted purely ſpiritual power given to the Apoſtles, and by them to all their Succeſſors. Although its manifeſt our Superiors have no ſuch Deſign in either of the Oaths, both becauſe the Refuſers of the Oaths are not accuſed of Error or Hereſy, but of Treaſon; and they are ſtill charged, they ſuffer not for Religion but for Treaſon, unleſs their Religion teach them Treaſon. And our Superiors acknowledge no Treaſon in holding the Popes purely ſpiritual power of binding and loſing ſins, giving Orders, *&c.* But to acknowledge a forraign Prince or Prelate with power in certain Caſes to Depoſe his Sacred

Majeſty, or to have of his own proper right any External Coactive power here, this is deſervedly by them called Treaſon, or Treaſonable Doctrine. And indeed, to hold the depoſing Doctrine, is worſe, then to depoſe or Kill a King, becauſe the wickedneſs of him, who depoſes or Kills a King, dyes with the perſon depoſed; but he who Teaches depoſing or King-Killing Doctrine, Propagates Treaſon all over the World, and to all Generations. Note alſo, that depoſing and Murthering are neceſſarily Conjoined; for a Lawfully depoſed Prince that is no Prince, perſiſting to govern, becomes an *Aggreſſor* of his Neighbors lives, and Conſequently is as lyable to death as any who ſhould offer to Uſurp Regal Authority in any Princes Country without a Title. *And* Conſequently, they cannot be good ſubjects who hold ſuch Treaſonable Doctrines, becauſe they hold Doctrines deſtructive of the Civil Government, under which they live, and ſo dangerous to the Civil State, that his Majeſty is no longer than his Holineſs pleaſes, ſecure either of his Crown, life or thoſe his ſubjects Allegiance, who hold theſe new Anti-Chriſtian Doctrines, and that but even as probable Opinions; eſpecially ſince they hold it Lawful, to follow and act according to a probable Opinion, yea a leſs probable, as they do.

Beſides, had our Superiors, in either of the Oaths, deſigned to make us renounce any Article of our faith (which is the Cauſeleſs fear of thoſe who ſcruple the taking of them) they would have put it beyond all diſpute, and would have expreſt it ſo clearly, as we could not, but have ſeen it by the forms of the Oaths. And it were againſt Policy and common ſenſe to do otherwiſe. To frame an Oath with a deſign to make people either abjure their faith, or elſe make themſelves Obnoxious to puniſhment, and yet to word this Oath ſo obſcurely and Ambiguouſly, as he who ſhould be detected by it, may pretend, and with ſemblance of reaſon, that he can take it *Salva Fide*, without abjuring any thing of his faith. Is not this againſt common ſenſe? When the Heathen Emperors required the Primitive Chriſtians to abjure their faith, they required it ſo expreſly, as every one underſtood ſuch an one had renounced his faith; and ſhould any one after an abjuration have immediately profeſſ'd himſelf a Chriſtian as before, he would have been cited a ſecond time. But the caſe of us *Roman-Catholicks* in England

is

is quite different, we are not hindred, when we actually take the Oaths from profeſſing, that we cannot but believe the *Popes* purely ſpiritual power in the Court of Conſcience, provided we will renounce all his Coactive, Temporal Juriſdiction, (abuſively called ſpiritual, becauſe it is exerciſed by a ſpiritual perſon in Order to a ſpiritual end) in the Contentious Court. Nor can the propoſer of the Oaths imagin, he has made me renounce my faith by taking them, becauſe we agreed before I took them, I ſhould take them in a ſenſe, which ſhould not in the leaſt intrench upon my faith. Now what irreverence to God or diſedification to my neighbour, can there be in my taking an Oath, in a ſenſe, holy, and good, and true; and this ſenſe agreed upon both by the propoſer & the taker, provided the words, do but even Tolerably ſignify that ſenſe. It's certain the propoſer will not for this, look upon me as a perſon whom he cannot oblige by Oath, as he would look upon one who ſhould ſwallow an Oath contrary to the ſenſe of the propoſer, or his own Conſcience. And its no leſs certain, that I in the Sight and preſence of God, have aſſerted nothing, but what in my Conſcience I deemed Holy and good? Where then is the Malice of my Swearing? I have diſedified my Neighbour. But why ſo? Would any one give leſs Credit to my Oath for this? Certainly no prudent man would. Whereas in one that is really fore-ſworn by a manifeſt falſe Oath, no body afterwards (and deſervedly) regards his Oath. I know many will be apt to ill-interpret what I have done in this nick of time: But this will be but a Nine days wonder. When both Proteſtants and *Roman-Catholicks* ſee one who takes the Oaths in all things, live like a good Chriſtian, none will with juſt cauſe be Scandalized, but all prudent perſons will be Edified. *Proteſtants* will think me a better Subject, and *Roman-Catholicks* will judge me nothing a worſe Chriſtian for what *I* have done. Moreover, did our ſuperiors deſign to make us renounce an *Article* of our faith by either of the Oaths, what need of a further Teſt, being no *Roman-Catholick* can any more renounce any *Article* of his faith, then he can renounce Invocation of Saints or the real preſence.

We ought alſo to reflect upon the difference of the *Age* wherein we live from that of *Henry* the Eighth. When he firſt made the Oath of Supremacy, *Roman-Catholicks* ſtood in greater awe of the *Pope* then now they do, and more in all likelihood held

held the deposing power then now do hold it, nor could he have been secure of his Subjects *Allegiance* in case his Holiness should have Excommunicated him, and so might with reason upon a Civil account require of his Subjects to renounce the *Popes* purely spiritual power, if this be understood so as to import an *Authority* in the *Pope* to lay any commands on them, which should Oblige them under pain of sin; but had *Roman-Catholicks* been then disposed as they are generally now, he would never have required any such abjuration from them. *And* we have reason to bless God, we live under a Prince who requires not such an abjuration from us, but meerly an abjuration of such a spiritual power, as is Inconsistent with his Soveraign Civil *Authority* over all his Subjects, Clergy and Laity; that is, a *Papal* Coactive spiritual power by Temporal mulcts, to be exercised as well upon Kings as their Subjects.

Consider also, it is Ordinary in Corporations, and other *Societies*, for the same Oaths without any *Alteration* of words to signify more or less: and none scruple the taking of them, though according to the rigid letter of the words, they could not take them. For example, such a Magistrate or other person obliges himself by Oath to observe all the Laws of such a Community, when perhaps few of them are now observed as they were at the first making of such an Oath, and every one is supposed to swear only the Observance of such Laws as are then commonly observed. Nor will Superiors for all this, to satisfy scrupulous Consciences, Alter the form of the Oath, and put it in such words as none need scruple the taking of it. We must not think to prescribe Laws to our superiors, and make them Alter their injunctions as we please, and word them according to our Humors, but rather be thankful both to God and them, that they have made so favorable an Interpretation of their seemingly rigid commands, by word of mouth, publick Laws, and the pens of their Learnedest Doctors. So that whatsoever the Oath of Supremacy might signify in *Henry* the Eighths days, its manifest it signifies now only a Renunciation of any forreign Prince or Prelate, his Coactive jurisdiction in the contentious Court in *England*, independantly of his Sacred Majesties Authority.

In fine, let us imagine a Merchant arrived in *China* with a Considerable portion of goods, but he's prohibited to vent them, unless he will first take a certain Oath of Fidelity to the Prince

of

of the Country, which would admit of a good ſenſe or a bad one. He offers to ſwear, pretending he ought in Charity to ſuppoſe it is intended in the good ſenſe. His companion bids him take heed what he does, and Suggeſts that Oath was made a hundred years ago, by one who had a deſign thereby to Entrap the Conſciences of Chriſtians, and to make them renounce an Article of their Faith: Upon this the Merchant askes the immediate propoſer, in what ſenſe he requires him to ſwear; he tells him in the good ſenſe, and that himſelf could not, nor would not take it in the ſenſe the Chriſtian Merchant boggles at; and moreover aſſures him, whatſoever the firſt compiler of it deſigned by it, the preſent Prince requires only he ſhould ſwear in the good ſenſe, and which conſiſts well with all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith; and that ſeveral *Princes* have declared as much, and beſides, that the ſenſe the Chriſtian Merchant boggles at, the Prince of the Country regards not at all, nor is it at all his intereſt, or concerns his end in requiring the Oath. Who in ſuch Circumſtances would refuſe ſuch an Oath? And yet this is our very caſe: as is manifeſt by what has been ſaid above, and will ſtill be yet more manifeſt by what followes. The Oath of Supremacy interpreted to ſignify a renunciation of the *Popes* purely & properly ſpiritual power, can no more be taken by Proteſtants then *Roman-Catholicks*, but interpreted to ſignify a renunciation of the *Popes*, or other Prince or *Prelates* Coactive and improperly ſpiritual juriſdiction, by way of depoſition of our Soveraign, or laying Temporal mulcts upon his ſubjects in order to make purely ſpiritual Cenſures more effectual: the Oath thus interpreted, no good Subject, whether *Proteſtant* or *Roman-Catholick*, has reaſon to boggle at it.

But let us hear the Interpretation of the Oaths by our Laws, Civil Superiors, and their Doctors, with their Connivance and allowance, as was promiſed above. In an Act of Parliament (*ſtat. 5. Elizab.*) made in the fifth year of Queen *Elizabeths* Raign, there is an Interpretation of the Oath of Supremacy in an expreſs Proviſo. *That the Oath of Supremacy ſhall be taken and Expounded in ſuch form as is ſet forth in an Admonition annexed to the Queens Injunctions publiſhed in the firſt Year of her Raign.* The which Admonition was made to take away a ſcruple raiſed by ſome, as if the Queen had uſurped a Juriſdiction purely Spiritual, which ſhe Renounces: profeſſing, *that by vertue of that Oath, no other Authority is to be acknowledged* (Admon. of Q. *Eliz.*

to

to her Injunctions) *than what was Challenged and lately uſed by King* Henry *the Eighth, and King* Edward *the Sixth.* Note, This Clauſe is not to be ſuppoſed to be any part of the Interpretation of the Oath: but it is only intended to ſignify, that this is no new invented Uſurpation of a Title, but that the ſame had been allowed to thoſe two Kings before her: and *the ſame Authority* (ſays ſhe) *is and was of Antient time due to the Imperial Crown of this Realm.* Neither does ſhe ſay, that ſhe challenges all that thoſe two Kings did, but that that which ſhe requires, had been formerly granted to them. Her explication therefore, is ſet down clearly and diſtinctly in the following words, by which ſhe declares what that Authority is which ſhe Challenges, and which muſt be acknowledged in taking the Oath. viz. *That is, the Queen under God, to have the Soveraignty, and Rule over all manner of Perſons Born within theſe Realms, Dominions and Countries, of what Eſtate, either Eccleſiaſtical or Temporal, ſoever they be, ſo as no other Forreign power ſhall or ought to have any Superiority over them.* This Clauſe, according to the Queens Interpretation, Confirm'd by Act of Parliament, contains the true ſenſe of the Oath; ſo that if this Clauſe can be Sworn to, that is all that is ſignified in the form of the Oath. Now that by this Clauſe, only Civil power over all perſons Eccleſiaſtical is challenged, appears by a wrong Interpretation of the Oath, which ſhe complains to have been ſpread abroad, viz. *As if by the words of the ſaid Oath, it may be collected that the Kings and Queens of this Realm, poſſeſſors of the Crown, may challenge Authority and Power of Miniſtery of Divine Offices in the Church.* Ibid. She renounces all medling with any Offices purely Eccleſiaſtical in the Church (as alſo Dr. *Bilſon* declares by her Authority in the Words to be cited hereafter) ſhe pretends not *to adminiſter Sacraments, Confer Orders, inflict Eccleſiaſtical Cenſures, determin Controverſies of Faith* &c. But ſhe Challenges *a Supream Civil Authority* over all thoſe that have right to exerciſe thoſe Offices, as being her ſubjects, as well as the Laity: And this juriſdiction ſhe will have acknowledged *ſo* to be her peculiar right, *as that no Forraign Power ſhall or ought to have any ſuperiority over them*; that is, no part of this Regal Power, whatſoever ſpiritual Juriſdiction, which ſhe medles not withal, they may challenge. That this is the true ſenſe of this Clauſe, appears by that expreſſion (*So As*) which would be

be void of all ſenſe, if the meaning of it ſhould be conceived to be, That the Queen has the Supream Regal Authority, *ſo as* no other has a paſtoral Authority purely Spiritual, derived only from the Keys, no way prejudicial to the Regal power of the Sword. And this ſenſe is evidently confirm'd by the *Act.* 5. *Eliz.* (*Act.* 5. *Eliz.* c. 1.) which gives this title to the *Act.* 10. *Eliz.* That it is an *Act by which there is reſtored to the Crown the Antient Juriſdiction over the ſtate Eccleſiaſtical and Spiritual, and an Aboliſhing of all Forreign Power repugnant to the ſame:* not ſimply *all Forreign Power*; but only that which ſhould diminiſh her Regal Power. For how ridiculous would it be to declare a power challenged, and another power renounced that has no Repugnancy to it, and renounced with the words *SO AS.*

Concerning this Admonition, its worth our noting: 1. By Making, and with Authority Publiſhing that Admonition and Injunction; She expreſly Aſſumes as her Right, a Power to interpret Oaths and Acts of Parliament: which if She may do, ſo doubtleſs may her Succeſſors. Now if our preſent Soveraign ſhould be conſulted concerning the Oath of Supremacy, as He has been to my Knowledge concerning the Oath of Allegiance: I doubt not but He would give the ſame Anſwer, which He did concerning the Oath of Allegiance: to wit, that he required only Civil Allegiance, and Civil Duties to be promiſed him by it, and Medled not at all with the *Popes* Spiritual Power, as purely ſuch, that were to be Renounced by the Takers of it, but only ſuch a Coactive Temporal Power, as was Inconſiſtent with his Lawful Soveraignty over all his Subjects, Eccleſiaſtical and Civil.

2. Concerning this Admonition of Q. *Elizabeth*, take notice moreover, that She gives power to any one that takes the Oath, in taking it to ſignify, that he accepts it with the ſaid meaning: For ſaies She, if any Perſon, that has conceived any other ſenſe or form of the ſaid Oath *ſhall accept the ſame Oath with this Interpretation, ſenſe or meaning, Her Majeſt is well pleaſed to accept every ſuch in that behalf, as her good and obedient Subject; and ſhall acquit them of all manner of penalties, contained in the ſaid Act againſt ſuch as ſhall Peremptorily or Obſtinately refuſe to take the ſame Oath. Thirdly*, Note that this her Interpretation and Addition is moreover eſtabliſhed by a following Act of

Parliament, which ſaies, That *it is to be taken and expounded in this form.* *Laſtly* note, that the Oath it ſelf is by the Queen in her Admonition, ſaid to be an *Oath preſcribed to be required of divers Perſons, for the Recognition of their Allegiance to her.* Which ſhews it concern'd not belief but duty, only in Maintaining her Supreme Civil Authority. *Stat.* 5. *Eliz.*

Next in King *James* his dayes; what was conceived to be the power challenged by our Kings in Vertue of that Oath, will eaſily appear by a notable paſſage in his Premonition to all Chriſtian *Monarches*, p. 9. In which his intention is to convince (as he ſaies) thoſe (Roman) *Libellers of willful Malice, who impudently affirm that the Oath of Allegiance was deviſed for deceiving and intrapping Papiſts in points of Conſcience.* Now ſpeaking thus, ſurely he would not it ſhould be believed, that his meaning was by continuing to urge the *Oath of Supremacy*, likewiſe to deceive and entrap his poor Subjects in points of Conſcience. From which unworthy Intention how averſe he was; that is, how far from aſſuming to himſelf, or even denying to the *Pope* a Juriſdiction purely ſpiritual, the following words will teſtify. *The Truth is* (ſaies he, Ibid.) *that the Lower Houſe of Parliament at the firſt framing of that Oath, made it to contain, that the* Pope *had no Power to Excommunicate me; which I cauſed them to reform, only making it to conclude, that no Excommunication of the* Popes *can warrant my Subjects to practiſe againſt my Perſon or State, denying the depoſition of Kings to be in the* Popes *Lawful Power: as indeed, I take any ſuch Temporal violence, to be far without the limits of ſuch a Spiritual Cenſure as Excommunication.*

And *Suarez* and *Becanus* go further, affirming that that by Excommunication, no Temporal right or power is taken away or diminiſhed. *So careful was I* (ſaith he) *that nothing ſhould be contain'd in this Oath, except the profeſſion of Natural Allegiance, and Civil, and Temporal Obedience, with a promiſe to reſiſt all contrary uncivil violence.* And preſently after he adds: That *the occaſion of the Oath was ordained only for making of a true diſtinction between* Papiſts *of quiet diſpoſition, and in all other things good Subjects, and ſuch other* Papiſts *as in their Hearts maintained the like violent bloody Maxims, that the Powder-Traitors did.* Nay moreover, touching the Patriarchal Juriſdiction, he ſaies, *pag.* 46. *For my ſelf* (*if that were the Queſtion*) *I would*

with

with all my heart give my consent that the Bishop of Rome should have the first seat: I being a Western King would go with the Patriark of the West. And how far he was from Challenging spiritual Jurisdiction, he shewed by his constant Comitting such affairs to his Clergy (and our late Soveraign, and his Majesty now Raigning, have been yet most careful not to interpose themselves in functions purely spiritual: besides many expressions *Viva Vocis Oraculo)* only adding his Regal Authority for the execution of their Ordinances: but more publickly and validly by a new confirming, and causing to be published by his Authority, the Articles of the English Clergy, among which the 37, is: *We do not give our Kings either the Administration of Gods word or Sacraments, which the Injunctions published lately by Q.* Elizabeth *do most evidently declare: But only that prerogative, which we see to have been always attributed to all Godly Princes by himself in holy Scriptures, that is, to preserve or containe all Estates, and Orders committed to their trust by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil in their duties, and restrain contumacious offenders with the civil Sword.*

This one Article, publickly acknowledged by all English Protestants, may alone suffice to Demonstrate evidently and distinctly, that it is only a Civil Jurisdiction, that the Kings of *England* Challenge in Ecclesiastical Matters, and not at all an Authority purely spiritual or Pastoral. They are as all other Christian Princes have ever been acknowledged, *Custodes utriusque Tabulæ.* They ought to see and provide, that all their subjects do their duty, both to God and Man; thus far their just power extends, which must be submitted to, either by obeying or suffering: Wherein that duty consists, which concernes the Divine Worship, they are to learn from the Church.

We have heard the Interpretations of our Law, and Soveraign Princes concerning the Oath of Supremacy, in whose favor it is taken, who certainly can interpret such Oaths as concern their own safety; and when their interpretations do no ways enlarge their own power, nor diminish their Subjects rights. Let us hear the interpretation of Protestant Doctors with our Princes allowance. In Q. *Elizabeths* days, we have the Testimony of Doctor *Bilson*, afterwards Bishop of *Wincheſter*; whose expressions are these. *The Oath,* (saith he of Subject. 2. part. p. 118.) *Expresses not the duty of Princes to God, but ours to*

them. And as they muſt be obeyed when they joyn with the truth, ſo muſt they be endured when they fall into Error. Which ſide ſoever they take, either Obedience to their wills, or Submiſſion to their Swords, is their due by Gods Law. And that is all which our Oath exacteth. p. 256. *From which Subjection unto Princes, no man within their Realm, Monk, Prieſt, Preacher, nor Prelate, is exempted. And without their Realms, no Mortal man has any power from Chriſt judicially to depoſe them, much leſs to invade them in open field, leaſt of all to warrant their ſubjects to Rebell againſt them.* Moreover, intending to explain in what ſenſe, Spiritual Juriſdiction ſeemes by the Oath to be given to Princes, he ſays Firſt. p. 173. *We make no Prince Judge of Faith.*

And then more particularly, p. 252. *To deviſe new Rites and Ceremonies for the Church, is not the Princes Vocation; but to receive and allow ſuch as the Scripture and Canons commend, and ſuch as the Biſhops, and Paſtors of the place ſhall adviſe, not infringing the Scriptures or Canons. And ſo for all other Eccleſiaſtical things and cauſes, Princes be neither the Deviſers nor Directors of them, but the confirmers and eſtabliſhers of that which is good, and diſplacers and Revengers of that which is evil. Which power we ſay they have in all things and cauſes, be they Spiritual, Eccleſiaſtical or Temporal.* Laſtly, to explain the Negative clauſe in the Oath. p. 218. he ſays. *In this ſenſe we defend Princes to be Supreme, that is not at liberty to do what they liſt, without regard of truth or right: but Without Superior on Earth to repreſſe them with violent means, and to take their Kingdom from them.* Thus Doctor *Bilſon*, and his book peruſed and approved by publick Authority. And to ſuch a ſenſe of the Oath as this, there is not a Catholick Clergy-man in *France*, *Germany*, *Venice* or *Flanders*, but would readily ſubſcribe.

Doctor *Carleton* in King *James* his time, thus, of Juriſd. c. 1. p. 8, 9. *Bellarmine* (ſaith he) *diſputing of Juriſdiction ſaith, There is a triple power in the Biſhop of Rome, firſt of Order; Secondly of Internal Juriſdiction; Thirdly of External Juriſdiction: The firſt is refer'd to the Sacraments: the ſecond to inward Government which is in the Court of conſcience: the third to that external Government which is practiſed in external courts: And confeſſes, that of the firſt and ſecond there is no queſtion betw en us, but only of the third. Then of this* (ſaith Carleton) *we are agreed that the queſtion between us and them, is only of Juriſdiction Coactive in external*

external Courts, binding and compelling by force of Law, and other External mulcts and puniſhments, beſides Excommunication. As for ſpiritual Juriſdiction of the Church, ſtanding in Examination of controverſies of Faith, Judging of Hereſies, depoſing of Heretick's, excommunication of Notorious Offenders, Ordination of Prieſts and Deacons, Inſtitution and Collation of Benefices, and ſpiritual Cures, &c. *This we reſerve entire to the Church, which Princes can not give or take from the Church. This power has been practis'd by the Church without Coactive Juriſdiction, other then of Excommunication. But when matters handled in the Eccleſiaſtical conſiſtory are not matters of Faith and Religion, but of a Civil nature, which yet are called Eccleſiaſtical, as being given by Princes, and appointed to be within the Cognizance of that conſiſtory, and when the cenſures are not Spiritual but carnal, compulſive, coactive, here appears the power of the civil Magiſtrate. This power we yield to the Magiſtrate; and here is the Queſtion, whether the Magiſtrate has right to this power and Juriſdiction,* &c. *This then is the thing which we are to prove, That Eccleſiaſtical coactive power by force of Law, and corporal puniſhments, by which Chriſtian people are to be govern'd in external, and contentious Courts, is a power which of right belongs to Chriſtian Princes.* And afterward he ſays, p. 42. *Concerning the extention of the Churches Juriſdiction, it cannot be denyed, but that there is a power in the Church not only internal, but alſo of External Juriſdiction. Of internal power there is no queſtion made. External Juriſdiction being underſtood all that is practis'd in external Courts or Conſiſtories, is either definitive or Mulctative. Authority definitive in matters of Faith and Religion belongs to the Church, Mulctative power may be underſtood either as it is with Coaction, or as it is referred to Spiritual Cenſures. As it ſtands in ſpiritual Cenſures, it is the right of the Church, and was practiſed by the Church, when the Church was without a Chriſtian Magiſtrate, and ſince. But Coactive Juriſdiction was never practis'd by the Church, when the Church was without a Chriſtian Magiſtrate: but was always underſtood to belong to the Civil Magiſtrate, whether he were Chriſtian or Heathen.* Thus Doctor Carleton Biſhop of *Chicheſter* underſtood the Supremacy of the King acknowledged in the Oath.

Doctor *Bramhal*, Biſhop of Derry in our late Kings days, and in our preſent Soveraigns *Archbiſhop of Armagh*, thus declares both the Affirmative, and Negative parts of the Oath, Touching the Kings

Supreme

Supreme Authority in matters Ecclesiastical, and renouncing the *Popes* Jurisdiction in the same, here in England; in his *Schism guarded*. *My last ground*, saith he, *is that neither King Henry the Eighth, nor any of his Legislators did ever endeavour to deprive the Bishop of Rome of the power of the Keys, or any part thereof: Either the Key of Order, or the Key of Jurisdiction. I mean Jurisdiction purely Spiritual, which has place in the inward Court of Conscience, and over such Persons as submit willingly. Nor did ever challenge, or endeavour to assume to themselves, either the Key of Order or the Key of Jurisdiction, Purely Spiritual. All which they deprive the* Pope *of, all which they assumed to themselves, was the external Regiment of the Church by Coactive Power, to be exercised by Persons capable of the respective Branches of it. This power the Bishops of* Rome *never had, or could have justly over their Subjects, but under them whose Subjects they were. And therefore, when we meet with these words, or the like (That no forriegn Prelate shall exercise any manner of power, Jurisdiction,* &c. *Ecclesiastical within this Realm) it is not to be understood of Internal, or purely spiritual power in the Court of Conscience, or the power of the Keyes; we see the contrary practised every day; but of external Coactive Power in Ecclesiastical causes in* Foro contentioso. *And that it is, and ought to be so understood; I prove clearly by a Provizo in one main Act of Parliament, cited below; and an Article of the* English *Church, cited above. They, that is the Parliament, in that Act profess their Ordinance is meerly political: what hath a political ordinance, with power purely spiritual? They seek only to preserve the Kingdom from rapin,* &c. *And then having produced the Article (above) he concludes.* You see the power is Political, the *Sword is Political; all is Political. Our Kings leave the power of the Keyes, and Jurisdiction purely spiritual, to those to whom Christ hath left it.*

Again he addes. *p.* 169. *Whereseoever our Lawes do deny all Spiritual Jurisdiction to the* Pope *in* England, *it is in that sense, that we call the Exteriour Court of the Church, the Spiritual Court. They do not Intend at all to deprive him of the power of the Keyes, or of any spiritual power, that was bequeathed him by Christ, or by his Apostles, when he is able to prove his Legacy.* And *p.* 219. he saies. *We have not Renounced the substance of the* Papacy, *except the substance of the* Papacy *do consist in Coactive power.*

In fine, Hear a notable Provizo, extant in that very Statute, in

in which the *Popes* Juriſdiction was moſt prejudiced, and the greateſt Authority in Eccleſiaſtical Matters, conferr'd upon King *Henry* the 8*th*. The words are theſe, *Provided always, that this Act* (Stat. 25. H. 8. cap. 21.) *nor any thing or things therein contained, ſhall be hereafter Interpreted or Expounded, that your Grace, your Nobles and Subjects intend by the ſame to decline or vary from the Congregation of Chriſt's Church, in any things concerning the very Articles of the* Catholick *Faith of Chriſtendom; or in any things declared by Holy Scripture and the Word of God, neceſſary for your and their Salvation: but only to make an Ordinance by policies, neceſſary and convenient, to repreſs Vice, and for good Conſervation of this Realm in peace, unity and tranquillity, from rapin and ſpoyl, inſuing much the old Antient Cuſtoms of this Realm in that behalf. Not minding to ſeek for any Reliefs, Succours or Remedies for any Worldly things, and Humane Laws, in any caſe of neceſſity, but within this Realm, at the Hands of your Highneſs, your Heirs and Succeſſors, Kings of this Realm; which have, and ought to have an imperial power and authority in the ſame, and not Obliged in any Worldly cauſes to any other Superior.* By this Proviſo never repealed, the Parliaments Ordinance is declared to be meerly *Political*, and the Kings Independance on forreign power, is *in Worldly things and Humane Laws*, he being, *in Worldly cauſes not Obliged to any other Superiour.*

Thus far of the ſenſe in which both the moſt Judicious among the *Engliſh* Proteſtants have declared, and have been Authorized to declare, what power it is, that by the Oath is deferred to the Kings of *England*, and renounced to be in any forreign Prince or Prelate, to wit, a Civil political power, whereſoever it can be exerciſed in any cauſes Eccleſiaſtical, *&c.* Againſt this, there is not extant a Contradictory Teſtimony of any one Proteſtant Writer: So that the Proteſtant Subjects of *England*, judging that they have unqueſtionable grounds to judge this only to be the ſenſe of the Oath; in this ſenſe only do they take it, and require it to be taken by others.

Certain Objections *Anſwered.*

1. Shall we then take that Oath, which Biſhop *Fiſher*, and Sir *Thomas Moor* refuſed with the loſs of their Lives, and divers other worthy perſons have ſuffered very ſharply for? I *Anſwer*,

swer, 1. 'Tis a great Miſtake: the Oath of Supremacy was made ſome Years after their Deaths: beſides, our Oath is not the ſame with that of *Henry* the *8th*. much leſs the ſame with that, as it was ſince Interpreted by Queen *Elizabeth*. If divers others have ſuffered for the Refuſal of the Oath of Supremacy, even ſince Queen *Elizabeths* Interpretation, I wiſh they had left us their reaſons, that we might have been able to have judged of the weight of them: as for their example, it is no Infallible Rule. We are piouſly to ſuppoſe they did, in the ſincerity of their Hearts, do what they thought themſelves obliged to do, and conſequently have a reward of their ſufferings, though they miſſed a little through Ignorance or Miſtake: But as for our parts, we muſt Anſwer to God, why we refuſe to obey the innocent Commands of our Lawful Superiour, to the Breeding and Maintaining a continual ſewd, miſ-underſtanding, or Heart-burning, betwixt us and our Leige, and our fellow Subjects. Refuſers of the Oaths may raſhly judge, if they pleaſe, that we take them againſt our Conſciences, to avoid the anger of our Temporal Prince; but we matter not their harſh Cenſures, ſo long as we know we take them according to our Conſciences; to avoid the Eternal anger of the King of Kings, who commands us to Obey our Temporal Sovereigns, in all their Lawful Commands, under pain of his Everlaſting diſpleaſure. 2. 'Tis no new thing for even Glorious Martyrs to hold material *Hereſies*. God pitty the World if all are Damned; who hold a Material *Hereſy*, through Education, or want of due Inſtruction, or Mature Impartial Conſideration. The great Saint *Cyprian* held Rebaptization of perſons Baptized by *Heretiks*, and no doubt was in diſpoſition of mind, as ready to dye for that his Error, which he imagin'd a Chriſtian Verity, as he was, and did dye for the true Faith in other points. If in the Sincerity of our Hearts, we judge what we hold to be the Faith of Chriſt, and do therefore Tenaciouſly adhere to it, without doubt ſuch a ſuffering for God ſhall have its reward, let us be in whatſoever external Communion. A Servant who ſhould expoſe his Life for what he invincibly thought to be his Maſters will, would no leſs deſerve of his Maſter, then if he did ſuffer for his true will. So long as the Soul does believe ſuch a ſufficient number of truths, as diſpoſe it for the beatifying Sight of God, and has a will to dye, rather than Offend him, it cannot miſcarry, though through ignorance

Ignorance it miſs a little, as to ſome particular caſes. This for the comfort of thoſe, who in the ſincerity of their hearts, ſuffer for an erroneous Conſcience. Beſides it's not clear, that Sir *Thomas Moor* ſuffered for denying *Henry* the 8*ths*. Supremacy. He feared the buſineſs of the Holy Maid of *Kent*, *Elizabeth Barton*, ſhould be charged upon him; and his not approving the Queens Divorce was too well known. It is certain that on the very day of the Execution of the foreſaid *Elizabeth Berton*, both the Biſhop of *Rocheſter*, *John Fiſher*, and Sir *Thomas Moor* were ſent to the Tower, not for their denying the Supremacy, but for their denying to take the Oath, preſcrib'd by the then late Statute, and the Oath then made, for acknowledging the Kings Marriage with *Ann Bullen*, to be Lawful, *&c. Sand. de Sc. if. Ang.* l. 2. p. 86.

Object. 2. Some, and thoſe good men too, ſay they are damn'd who take the Oaths. I read *Rom.* 13. *The powers that be, are Ordain'd of God; and they that reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.* But I no where read damnation to them who obey the powers they live under. *As* we do, who take the Oaths in Obedience to our Superiors. Thus to condemn one another to the pit of Hell, for we know not what, is the ready way to make the Vulgar multitude fear no Hell, nor damnation for any thing, or from any body. I have been taught to believe Chriſtian perfection, does not conſiſt in being nicely Scrupulous in things doubtful, and obſcure, and ſuch as wherein good, and learned men differ; but in being ſincerely faithful in things manifeſt, and clear, and ſuch as wherein all agree. Let us be zealous in proclaiming Saint *Pauls Anathemas*: Neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor abuſers of themſelves with mankind; Nor thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, nor any who love not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God: but be very ſparing in making new *Anathemas* of our own, againſt thoſe who in the ſincerity of their hearts differ from us, and perhaps not without reaſon, would we Calmly and indifferently hear them. I have taken the Oaths, if you think I have done amiſs, pity me, pray for me, and better inſtruct me: I am willing to condemn what I have done upon better information. I think it no bad rule for the Vulgar, in things wherein they ſee, good and learned men differ; with a ſincere heart, and good intention to do either, or what likes them beſt, after an Examination of things, to the beſt of their power. Such humble Souls cannot miſs dangerouſly.

It is no new thing in the Church of Chriſt, ſuch is the infirmity of Humane Nature, for even good and learned men to diſfer, and with a great deal of heat too.

Object. 3. Others ſay, they will refuſe Abſolution to thoſe who take the Oaths. If one will not, another will. Firſt prove your Abſolution worth the having, and then threaten to deny it to the takers of the Oaths. Conſider in the ſight of God, whether you have not made it vile, and deſervedly contemptible; not by ſelling it for money; but worſe, by giving it for nothing; for Trifles; for *inſignificant pennances*; five *Paters* and *Aves*, for five days, in Honor of the five Wounds of our Bleſſed Lord, *&c* for a fornication or a drunken debauch. By ſuch ſlight and eaſy *Reconciliations*, not curing but killing poor Souls, not diſheartning but animating to ſin. The poor penitent coming to you only with one ſin, but going from you with two: Coming only with a ſimple Fornication, but returning with his Fornication unremitted, and a boldneſs to repeat it on the next occaſion to boot; finding its pardon ſo facil. But why ſo ſevere? Were not this zeal better ſpent againſt known Notorious offenders? Is not this to ſtrain at Gnats, and ſwallow Camels? With all facility, month after month, without any appearance of amendment, to abſolve known Mortal offenders, and to refuſe to admit thoſe to the Sacraments, whoſe Conſciences accuſe them not of having done amiſs? Take heed, whil'ſt cauſleſly you refuſe to looſe others, you do not indeed bind your ſelves: As its certain you do, unleſs your ignorance excuſe you. True Zeal of God, and the good of ſouls, its Univerſal: Humor and paſſion, its Freekiſhly rigid in ſome particulars, but unſufferably laxe, and remiſs in others. We owe our preſent ſufferings to our precipitated Mock-*Abſolutions*, and other dangerous, and too too Epidemical abuſes, ſtrangely prejudicial to ſolid piety: Nor can we expect the *Almighty* ſhould hold his hand from puniſhing of us, until we acknowledge our faults and mend. Would we heartily renounce the *Popes* Coactive juriſdiction, and be contented to part with a few Traſhy new Doctrines and practices, we might yet expect to find favor both from God and our Superiors; and until we do ſo, we deſerve favor from neither. O how happy would it be that we could hit upon the Golden mean, neither to diſhearten weak well-meaning ſouls by too much ſeverity, nor yet to encourage bold offenders by too much mildneſs. *Conſult the Learned Arnauld.* *Object.*

Object. 4. Others, who abhor the Depoſing Power, as Impious, and contrary to the Word of God; yet have difficulty to ſwear, that it is Heretical: becauſe Heretical ſtrictly taken, ſuppoſes ſome Decree of a General Council, declaring it to be Heretical. Was there then nothing Heretical, before the Council of *Nice?* But, as to this; 'tis unreaſonable to imagine, the Propoſer of any Oath propoſes it to me in a Senſe, which both he and I know to be Falſe; when the Words will admit of a Senſe, which both of us judge to be True; eſpecially, when the Propoſer muſt actually take the Oath, as well as my ſelf. But this is our Caſe. Add; The Propoſers Deſign in making the Oath, is ſufficiently fulfilled in the Senſe we both agree to be True: For the Deſigne of the Oath of *Allegiance* is to ſecure His Majeſty, that His Subjects do in their Hearts believe, that the *Pope* has no Power to Depoſe Him: Whether they believe ſo, becauſe it has been ſo determined by a General Council; or becauſe they deem it contrary to the Word of God, [*My Kingdom is not of this World*] is nothing to the Propoſer's Purpoſe. Further; *Proteſtants* making the Holy Scriptures the Adequate Rule of Faith, they are to be ſuppoſed to underſtand by Heretical Doctrine, ſuch Doctrine (at the moſt) which is purely contrary to the Scriptures, whether a General Council have declared it ſo, or no: Finally; Why ſhould we take *Heretical* in a ſtricter Senſe, than commonly our *Doctors* take it; when they call one anothers Doctrines *Heretical*, that is Erroneous, and in their Judgment inconſiſtent with Faith.

Object. 5. Others have difficulty (they ſay) to ſwear any thing to be Heretical, which they are not Infallibly certain, to be ſo; which (they ſay) they cannot be, till it be determind by a General Council. As to this: As to all Oaths; I conceive, we are to conſider the End of the Propoſer of them. Now, the End of our Civil Superiors in the Oath of Allegiance, being only to ſecure themſelves, that we do in our hearts diſown the Depoſing Power, as Wicked and Impious; they cannot reaſonably be ſuppoſed to require of us, to Swear Abſolutely the thing, but only our own judgement; That is, That in the bottom of our Hearts, we do indeed judge the Depoſing Doctrine, to be Impious and Heretical. Nor indeed does any Man Swear more, when he Swears, he ſaw one Man kill another.

Object. 6. Others make a great difficulty, that they must Swear according to the usual Sense and Meaning of the Words; and therefore, though the Words may admit of a good Sense yet they conceive, (according to their ordinary and usual Meaning) their Sense is very bad, and unlawful. For example: The Word *Spiritual*, ordinarily signifies the Spiritual Power of Excommunication, Binding and Loosing, &c. 'Tis Answered; That Spiritual in our *English* Language, does commonly and ordinarily signify also Coactive jurisdiction, by Pecuniary Mulcts, Deposition; Imprisonment, &c. when exercised by Spiritual Persons, in order to a Spiritual End. And the Circumstances of our Laws Interpretations, *Princes* Declarations, and their *Doctors* Explications of the Oath of Supremacy, determin the Word *Spiritual* in the Oath, to signify nothing but Purely External, Coactive Power, exercised by Spiritual Persons to Spiritual Ends. And thus Words, never so Equivocal, are determind by certain Circumstances, to signify most determinately, such a particular thing, and no other; though out of those Circumstances, they signify something else, most Properly and Primarily. As in this sentence, *Canis non mordet in* Anglia: *The Dog does not Bite in* England: The word *Dog*, does most properly signify the *Dog-star*, although otherwise, that be its less primary signification. And in this sense, our *Bishops Courts* are called *Spiritual Courts*; not because the Power exercised in them, is Properly and Rigidly Spiritual, but because they are kept by Spiritual Persons; and in order to make purely Spiritual Censures, have their Force: Though the Power they exercise in them, be indeed Temporal, and not communicated to them by *Christ*, or the *Pope*, but by his *Sacred Majesty*, the Fountain of all Coactive Jurisdiction, in the contentious Court.

Seventhly, It is Objected: The design of the first making of the Oath of Supremacy, was to make a Schism from *Rome*, and to renounce all Power whatsoever in the *Pope*, both as to the Clergy, and Civil State of *England*: And consequently, none who hold his Holiness to be universal Pastor of Christ's Church, can Lawfully take the said Oath; which seemes to have been made on purpose, to renounce his universal Pastorship. Hence our Laws make it Treason, to receive even Holy Orders from the *Pope*. And *de facto* ever since the Reformation, no Appeals have been made to *Rome*, even concerning Matters purely

ly Spiritual; as to decide Differences about Faith, &c. but all are determined by a National Convocation, without the leaſt regard to the *Pope's* Authority as univerſal Paſtor. Beſides what has been ſaid above, both as to the difference of the preſent Oath, from *Henry* the *Eighths:* as alſo, to the different ſenſe of the ſame Words in the Oath, by reaſon of Queen *Elizabeths*, and our *Parlamentary*, and *Princes* Declarations, &c. It may be Anſwered; That in the commands of our Superiours, it concerns not us what pervers extrinſecal Intentions, they have in them (not that I would be underſtood, to reflect upon my *Princes* Intentions; but only, to anſwer the Argument, granting its moſt Rigid Suppoſitions to be True) but it concerns us only to conſider, Whether what they command us, be Lawful and Good: And if it be, we are bound to obey, and have nothing to anſwer, for their abuſing our Obedience, to their unlawful deſignes. For example: Though the *Emperor's* Command of enrolling all the World, was out of Covetouſneſs or Ambition, Saint *Joſeph*, and others, who obey'd, and pay'd the Tax required, were innocent in their Obedience. In like manner, ſuppoſing in our caſe, our Superiors deſign in the Oaths to be to Found or Uphold a Schiſm; that concerns not us; provided by the Oaths, they require us to Attribute no Power to his *Majeſty*, but what of Right belongs to him; and to Abjure no Power of the *Pope*, but what he either never had, or at leaſt not from Chriſt; but from Temporal *Magiſtrates*, and dependantly on their pleaſure; Our Swearing is Innocent, and Lawful. Thus Cities and Countries Lawfully Swear Fidelity to an Uſurper, when he is in quiet Poſſeſſion of his Uſurped Dominion. Note alſo; That two Perſons in ſuch a circumſtance, taking the ſame Oath of Allegiance, one of them may Sin grievouſly, and the other not at all: To wit, If one of them Swear with a deſign to keep out the Lawful Heir.

Add: Whatſoever the firſt Deſign, and Senſe of the Oath of Supremacy was, it's manifeſt, ſucceeding Princes finding that their own Biſhops could not take it in the Rigid Senſe of the Words; ſo favourably Interpreted them, as they made it Takeable, not only by *Proteſtants*, but *Roman-Catholicks*. And as for not taking Orders from *Rome*, &c. it's one thing what our Laws prohibit, another what I am required to Swear, or Abjure in the Oath of Supremacy.

Obj. 8.

Obj. 8. All generally condemn the Oaths, Prieſts and People. Have you Conſulted all? There are more for the Taking of them, than you think for; though Secret, for fear of the *Pope* and *Jeſuits*. When the Oath of *Supremacy*, in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Days, was firſt Propoſed; of Seven Thouſand to whom it was offered, only Two Hundred and odd refuſed it. As to what I hear is ſaid by ſome; That the *Sorboniſts* ſay, it cannot be taken: Though none have a greater Reverence for the Learned *Sorbon*, than my ſelf; yet I think, they are unfit Judges in our Caſe; it wholly depending on the Knowledge of our Acts of *Parliament*, *Princes* Declarations, their *Doctors* Explications, with their Allowance, *&c.* Beſides, to give them a *Rowland* for their *Oliver*; Sir *John Winter* (as he told me himſelf) many Years ago, had the Judgment of *Sorboniſts*, Secular *Prieſts*, and *Jeſuits*, that he might take the Oath of *Supremacy*, declaring the Senſe which the Law allows. Beſides, how many of theſe *All* are Competent *Judges* in the Caſe? Take away Green Aprons, and White Aprons, and thoſe who have never Impartially examin'd what's to be ſaid on both ſides, and your Monſtrous *All* will dwindle away into a ſmall inconſiderable Number. And How many are you ſure, ſpeak their Hearts to you, and their own Judgments, and not the Sentiments of the Superiors of their Body, or of ſome others; contrary to what they think, according to their own beſt Underſtanding? For you muſt know, there want not Spiritual Guides, who commonly hold, they may not only direct, and give Counſel to others, contrary to their own private ſecret Judgment; but alſo themſelves may ſafely Practiſe, contrary to their own Judgment; provided, they have the Opinion of others, whom they deem Learned, for what they do, or adviſe others to do. Indeed, were all Superiors Infallible, it were a ſecure and compendious way to find out Truth, to follow their Sentiments, without any further Examen: But, being Fallible as well as their Neighbors, their Sentiments are Valuable, according to the Impartial diligence they uſe above others, to find out the very Truth; and according to the Reach and Depth of their Natural Underſtandings, and acquired Learning. Beſides, an awful Fear, how their Sayings or Doings may be repreſented or interpreted at *Rome*, hinder them from ſeeing, or (at leaſt) from profeſſing that Truth; which others, who have no ſuch Byas upon them, clearly ſee, and boldly profeſs. The Sentiment of a few Judi-

cious,

cious, sincere, and diligent free Enquirers after Truth, is more Considerable, than the Say-so's of as many Hundred others, who without Examen, or after a slight Examen, or with much Prejudice or Passion (mis-called Zeal) speak their Minds. More-over; In an Age, wherein there is such a general Corruption, both as to Doctrines and Practices, and these dangerous ones too; to be General is a pittiful Argument. A worthy *French Priest*, Mr. *Adrian Bordoise*, of the Community of Saint *Nicholas*, (scarce yet Cold in his Grave) feared not to say in his *Idea of a good Church-Man*; That he was made a *Priest* in an Age, wherein he could not find a better Rule of his Actions, than to Live quite otherwise than Clergy-Men; yea, even the more Learned commonly Lived. I would to God, it were not too true; that whosoever in this our corrupt Age, Reconciles himself to the Church of *Rome*, as he hopes for Salvation, he must resolve to Live quite otherwise than *Roman-Catholicks* commonly Live: Such Confidence is commonly had in Mock-Repentance, purely for the Fear of Hell-fire, elevated by Confession; Mock-Fastings, Mock-Absolutions, Mock-Pennances, Mock Knick-knack Devotions, Mock-Holy dayes, Mock-Extrinsecal Applications of the Super-abundant Merits of Saints, out of the Spiritual Treasury of the Church by Mock-Indulgences, *&c.* In such an Age to plead Generality, and the common Cry, is the weakest Argument for Truth imaginable. How of late were Loyal Writers against King-deposing, and King-killing Doctrines, aspersed by Men of Deposing Principles, as Schismatical, all over the Kingdom? And the worthy Answerer to the *Three Treatises of the* Jesuits *Loyalty*, was wondred at, that he would pass for a *Roman Catholick*, for his Pains. But I am sure, he has writ that in that Book all along, which all his Antagonists will never be able over-throw by any Reply. Others have a Difficulty to swear, the *Pope* ought to have no Coactive Jurisdiction in *England*; though they are satisfyed, he Actually has none, because it is the Pleasure of his *Majesty*, and his Parliament, he should have none. As to this: One who has an Estate taken from him by Act of *Parliament*, whether Justly or Unjustly, neither has, nor ought to have that Estate; That is, he has no longer any Legal Title to it, Things standing as they do. Much rather in our Case: When the *Pope*'s Coactive Jurisdiction, which he has no where out of his own Temporal Dominions, is Actually taken away by

by our *King* and *Parliament*, who freely gave it him: he neither has, nor ought to have (that is, has no Title to) any Coactive Jurisdiction in *England*; whatsover he has, as to purely Spiritual Jurisdiction. But that I refer to the *Doctors* to Dispute of.

As for his *Holiness* his Prohibition: It was never Legally promulgated and received, and consequently obliges not. Besides, no Human Law can oblige under so great Inconveniences: No particular Bull of the *Pope* can oblige more strictly, than the General Law of the Church: And yet, that (for example) of Abstaining from Flesh, obliges not with the Peril of my Health, or in troublesom Times of my Discovery; and thereby of bringing me in danger of Imprisonment, *&c.* As for Scandal: What you call Scandal, I call good Example: Or, if it must be Scandal, tis Taken, and not Given. Prudent Persons will not rashly judge, I act against my Conscience; and consequently will be by my Example, moved to examine my Reasons, and will with a good Conscience follow me. If some do ill by occasion of my doing my Duty, God help them: I am not bound to prevent their doing amiss at so dear a Rate, as I must, if I Refuse the Oaths, both as to my self, and Posterity, as well in Spirituals as Temporals. Some will talk ill of me; God forgive them. *Tu didicisti maledicere, & ego contemnere.* If they have learnt to Detract, I hope, God will give me Grace not to heed their Calumnies. These scattered Thoughts I deemed meet to make Publick, with humble Submission to better Judgments, and a sincere Willingness of being better Instructed, if I mistake.

Laus Deo.

FINIS.